

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 7 line 12 with the following amended paragraph:

By way of background, and with reference to Figure 1, the umbrella with which the invention is utilized will typically include a frame 100 having a longitudinally extending, central pole member 120, which can be made of wood, aluminum or another material, and which has a top end 140 and a bottom end 160. The bottom end 160 may be easily secured to the ground or any means of vertical affixment, although in the preferred embodiments the bottom end 160 may be secured within a base, not shown, which will ideally have wheels to facilitate movement of the umbrella from one place to another. The hub assembly comprises a main hub member 10, which is designed and configured to be interconnected with other components of the umbrella frame 100, has a central ~~cavity~~ aperture 15, best shown in Figure 2, extending axially therethrough for placement about the central pole member 120 and is slidable between the top 140 and bottom 160 ends of the pole member so as to permit the opening of the umbrella, as well as the closing of the umbrella, as indicated by the phantom lines shown in Figure 1. In at least one

embodiment, the hub ~~assembly~~ member 10 is also capable of rotating about the axis of the pole member 100.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 8 line 6 with the following amended paragraph:

-- As also shown in Figure 1, the umbrella frame 100 also includes an upper or secondary hub member 18 near the top end 140 of the pole 120. In the more preferred embodiments, this secondary hub member 18 is provided with a central cavity 19 extending axially therethrough for receiving the top end 140 of the pole 120, as shown in Figure 2, and ideally, is structured and configured to securely depend from the top end 140 of the pole, an inventive feature described in a previously filed U.S. patent application of the inventor herein, namely, Serial No. 10/008,536 filed on November 13, 2001, incorporated herein by reference. For example, and as shown in Figure 1, the central pole member 120 can include a threaded bolt 65 (whether secured to an exterior surface thereof or formed to extend from an interior thereof). This threaded bolt 65 is of a length sufficient to extend through a narrow upper portion of the central cavity 19 of the secondary hub member 18 such that a nut tightened about the bolt 65 will be capable of maintaining the

secondary hub member 18 in substantially rigid position about the pole 120. When desired, however, the nut may be loosened somewhat so as to allow the secondary hub member ~~60~~ 18 to rotate about the pole's axis, a feature which is helpful during windy or other adverse weather conditions. A finial or end cap 17 can also be secured to the bolt 65 for aesthetic purposes once a canopy has been positioned atop the umbrella frame 100. The end cap 17 also maintains the fabric canopy in a secured central position.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 9 line 7 with the following amended paragraph:

Still referring to Figure 1, the umbrella frame 100 includes a plurality of rib members 70 which form the outer framework of the umbrella and also a plurality of strut members 80. The rib and strut members may similarly be made of wood, plastic, or aluminum, another metal or other material, and the umbrella frame 100 can utilize any desired number and size of rib and strut members, depending on the particular size and shape of the umbrella canopy to be attached. Each of the rib members 70 are preferably secured pivotally at a top end thereof to the upper or secondary hub member 18. Each of the strut

members 80 are preferably secured pivotally at a first end 82 to the hub assembly 10 and are also preferably secured pivotally at a second end 84 to the rib members 70 at a point near the approximate midpoint of the rib members. The strut members 80 provide support for the rib members when the umbrella frame is in the extended or open position. The preferred pivotal attachment of the rib members 70 to the upper or secondary hub 18 and of the strut members 80 to the main hub assembly member 10 will be discussed in greater detail subsequently herein. As also shown in Figure 1, a retaining pin 112 can be attached to the hub assembly member 10 and can be placed within a retaining pin slot formed within the pole 120 in order to maintain the vertical position of the hub assembly member 10 along the pole 120. In addition, the pin 112 can be secured to the hub assembly member 10 via a cord having a noose loosely secured about the waist 13 of the hub assembly member 10 so as to allow for the free rotation of the hub assembly member 10 about the pole 120, even when the pin 112 is in place within the pin retaining slot. Other structures can be utilized to maintain the vertical position of the hub assembly member 10 along the pole 120, although ideally an inventive feature described as a "cam cleat member" in a previously filed U.S. patent application

of the inventor herein will be used, with said feature being shown and described fully in U.S. Patent No. 6,386,214 issued on May 14, 2002, and also in Serial No. 10/008,536 filed on November 13, 2001, both of which are incorporated herein by reference.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 10 line 18 with the following amended paragraph:

Referring more in particular now to the main hub ~~assembly~~ member 10, it is pointed out that in many embodiments it will be formed out of wood, preferably polished to offer a refined appearance, but that it could also be made from a number of other materials. In addition, the hub ~~assembly~~ member 10 can have many different shapes, but preferably, includes both an upper portion 12 and a lower portion 14. As is perhaps best shown in Figure 2, the hub ~~assembly~~ member 10 ideally includes a waist 13 so as to result in a generally hour-glass shape which provides comfort and which ergonomically fits better into one's hand for maneuverability of the hub ~~assembly~~ member 10 up and down along the umbrella frame's central pole member 120.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 11 line 5 with the following amended paragraph:

In at least one embodiment, and as illustrated in Figure 4, the hub assembly 10 of the present invention also includes a band 20. In particular, the band 20, which can be made from a thin, flat strip of steel or other metallic material is preferably wrapped around the girth or external peripheral surface of the hub ~~assembly~~ member 10, ideally at or near the upper portion 12 thereof and is fixed in this location. For example, the band 20 may be secured to the hub ~~assembly~~ member 10 by a set of screws driven into the wood of the hub assembly 10 so as to anchor the opposite free ends of the band 20. For the purpose of pivotally attaching the first ends 82 of the strut members 80 to the hub ~~assembly~~ member 10, a plurality of bracket members 40 are affixed to the periphery of the band 20, for example, by way of one or more screws 44 being driven through each bracket member 40, through the underlying band 20 and into the wood or other material of the hub ~~assembly~~ member 10. It is contemplated that the band 20 may be formed from other materials, including but not limited to other metals, composites, plastic, etc. In addition, the brackets may be made of a metal material, probably a stamped metal, but could also be

made of other materials, including plastic.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 12 line 1 with the following amended paragraph:

With reference now to Figure 3-A, the hub ~~assembly~~ member 10 illustrated in these embodiments includes a channel 30 formed around its girth or external peripheral surface. Ideally, the channel 30 is formed at or near the upper portion 12 thereof and further, is defined by both a bottom ledge 32 and a top ledge 34 as shown in Figure 2 and 3-A. Alternatively, and although not illustrated in the drawings, the channel 30 may be defined by only one ledge, such as bottom ledge 32. The channel 30 is preferably sized and dimensioned to correspond to the size and dimension of the bracket members 40, such that the rear wall 42 of each bracket member 40 fits within the channel 30 and rests on the ledge 32 or ledges 32, 34. In these embodiments, the bracket members 40 may also be secured within the channel 30 by way of one or more screws 44 driven directly into the wood or other material of the hub ~~assembly~~ member 10. Alternatively, and with reference to Figure 4, a metal band 20 can be wrapped around the hub ~~assembly~~ member 10 at or preferably within the channel 30, and the bracket members 40 can then be secured

thereto by one or more screws. It is contemplated that the channel 30 adds to the stability of the bracket members 40 due to their being kept in vertical alignment by the channel 30, and ideally, both top and bottom ledges 32, 34 thereof. In other words, this channel structure 30 helps to prevent the rotation or twisting and displacement of the bracket members 40, and consequently, they are less likely to become loosened and thereby yield an umbrella frame assembly which is more durable and stable. Further, the bracket members may be readily secured and removed from the channel structure, via screw 44, as shown in Figure 2. While a screw member is shown as the means of attachment for the brackets to the hub member 10, other forms of attachment may be employed, such as a machine threaded bolt, fitted notch or other element. Also shown in Figure 3-A is a "cam cleat member" 90 described briefly previously herein, which along with other components, not shown, permits the raising and lowering of the hub ~~assembly~~ member 10 along the central pole member 120 to open and close the umbrella.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 13 line 11 with the following amended paragraph:

In yet another preferred embodiment, and with reference now

to Figure 3-B, the hub ~~assembly~~ member 10 can be formed to have an upper portion 12 that is separate and distinct from the lower portion 14, and as such, this embodiment may be termed a 'split' or separated hub ~~assembly~~ member. In particular, the lower portion 14 of the hub assembly 10 can be formed to include both the waist 13 and the channel 30, preferably with only bottom ledge 32 as discussed previously herein, and in this embodiment, the upper portion 12 is formed to define a ring or disk like top having a slightly larger dimension so as to define upper ledge 32 34, as illustrated in Figure 3-B. In this embodiment, the lower portion 14 of the hub assembly 10 is mounted onto the pole of the umbrella first, and then, the upper portion 12 can be mounted on the pole as well, such that a channel 30 having both a bottom ledge ~~34~~ 32 and a top ledge ~~32~~ 34 is created and sandwiched between the upper and lower portions 12, 14. In other words, in this embodiment the upper and lower portions 12 and 14 are collectively sized and formed to create the channel 30 therebetween in the assembled condition, with preferably, the channel 30 being sized and dimensioned to correspond to the size and dimension of the bracket members 40, such that each bracket member 40 fits within the channel 30 and may be secured within the channel 30 by way of one or more screws driven directly into

the hub assembly 10. If desired, a band 20 can be included within the channel of this embodiment.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 15 line 16 with the following amended paragraph:

-- As shown in Figures 1, 2 and 4, the secondary hub member 18 is also provided with brackets for pivotally receiving the upper ends of rib members 70. The rib members 70 form the outer framework of the umbrella frame of the present invention whereas the strut members 80 provide support for the rib members when the umbrella frame is in the extended or open position. As shown in Figure 2, pivotal attachment of the rib and strut members to their respective brackets and hub members may occur by using a single screw extending through the bracket, such as at hole 45, through the strut member (or rib member) and through hole 46, where it can be bolted in place. Other like connectors can be used to allow the strut or rib members to be easily secured and removed from the brackets and indeed, for the brackets themselves to be easily replaceable. The rib and strut members may be made of aluminum or wood, for example. Also, and as shown in Figure 1, the strut members 80 may be pivotally secured to the rib members 70 by a collar member 96, which has

been described in a prior U.S. patent application, identified previously herein and/or in a related "parent" patent application. Also, with the present invention, many different configurations of the canopy can be achieved. For example, four rib members can be employed to form a square shaped canopy, eight rib members can be employed for an octagonal shaped canopy, three rib members can be employed for a triangular shaped canopy, six rib members can be employed for a rectangular shaped canopy and five rib members can be employed for a semi-octagonal shaped canopy. The number of ribs to be employed determines the number of strut members, and brackets to be employed. For example, with four rib members, four strut members and four brackets are employed. Canopies of varying shapes and sizes are attached to the umbrella frame by unscrewing the finial or end cap 17 from the top end 14 of the pole 120 and removing a securing nut. The canopy opening is placed over the threaded bolt 65 and the canopy cuffs are placed around the outer ends of the rib members. The securing nut and finial 17 are then placed back onto the threaded bolt 65. In one embodiment of the invention, the canopy members are SUNBRELLA 100% solution-dyed acrylic canopies or any other shade-like or non-shade like material.